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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 126  
By Bowers

A RESOLUTION memorializing the U.S. Congress to set aside  
TennCare funds for the prevention and  
treatment of alcohol and drug abuse.

WHEREAS, alcohol and drug abuse is a major problem in the state, generating crime and its related costs, spousal and child abuse, drunken driving, injury in the workplace, in the home and on the roadways, unemployment, welfare dependency of abusers and their families, and a host of medical and surgical illnesses; and

WHEREAS, benefits for the prevention and treatment of alcohol and drug abuse have been progressively ratcheted down, first under TennCare and more recently under TennCare Partners, to a point where few recipients receive adequate care; and

WHEREAS, failure to provide adequate care will result in an increase in medical and surgical costs under TennCare, increased crime, resulting in added costs for police enforcement, courts and incarceration, more incidents of drunken driving, accidents, spousal and child abuse, as well as an increase in welfare dependency; and

WHEREAS, the state has been unable to insure that adequate benefits for alcohol and drug abusers be provided by the Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) or the Behavioral Health Organizations (BHOs), or to determine what amount of benefits at what total cost are being provided; and

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WHEREAS, monies formally spent under Medicaid for the prevention and treatment of alcohol and drug abuse (approximately \$60 million in the year before TennCare) have been shifted to mental health and general medical benefits, or for MCO or BHO administrative costs; and

WHEREAS, by not granting needed and necessary benefits and failing to pay in a timely manner, MCOs and BHOs are destroying the safety net of alcohol and drug prevention and treatment providers in this state; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That this General Assembly hereby memorializes the Congress of the United States to set aside sixty million dollars (\$60,000,000) for the prevention and treatment of alcohol and drug abuse only, and that this money be administered directly by the Department of Health, Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services for the sole benefit of TennCare members requiring alcohol and drug abuse prevention and treatment according to criteria set forth by the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That no funds that are part of the State and Federal Alcohol and Drug Block Grant shall be transferred to or in any way used for or by TennCare.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President and Secretary of the United States Senate, the Speaker and the Clerk of the House of Representatives of the United States, each Member of the Tennessee Congressional Delegation, and the Secretary of State and the presiding officers of both Houses of the legislatures of each of the other states in the Union.